

## **Moran Urges Secretary Sebelius to Expand Hospital Program to Support Kansas Hospitals**

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced that he recently requested that U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius include Kansas as a state eligible to participate in the "Rural Community Hospital Demonstration Program" (the Program). Congress created the Program, which pays enhanced reimbursement to qualifying small community hospitals to help them meet the unique needs of their service areas, in response to financial concerns of these health facilities across the nation.

The ten most sparsely populated states in the United States were originally authorized for participation in the Program but Kansas was not initially selected to participate. According to 2008 U.S. Census Bureau statistics, Kansas ranks 11th in population density.

"Many community hospitals that routinely face financial hardships are experiencing magnified problems due to the current state of the economy," Moran said. "In fact, several Kansas hospitals appear to meet all the necessary criteria to be considered for the Program. Therefore, I believe that it would serve the intent of the legislation to allow Kansas hospitals to be considered for participation and I urge Secretary Sebelius to expand the Program in such a manner."

On February 6, 2008, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued a notice soliciting six additional hospitals to participate in the Program. Through this solicitation process, only four

additional hospitals were accepted from the original 10 participating states.

The Program was created under the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003.

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